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In the making up of his verbal paradigms, also, we think Professor March takes a too *a priori* method, establishing first a framework of what the verb ought to express, or expresses in other tongues, and then trying to make the Anglo-Saxon verb fit into it,—not without stretching. The same effect is given by his treatment of the syntax, in which Becker was not a desirable model to follow. Notwithstanding this drawback, however, the syntax is one of the most original and valuable parts of the grammar, and for it the deeper student of the language will be truly grateful.

We had marked for notice a number of points, as to which we regard Professor March as taking the wrong view, or suggesting an untenable theory; but they are of comparatively slight consequence, and may be let pass. A man of his marked individuality cannot well help striking out occasionally into paths where others will be shy of following him.

The Reader is a worthy companion-book to the grammar. It contains seventy large octavo pages of extracts from the Anglo-Saxon literature, of every variety of style, carefully edited, and followed by full and elaborate notes. For the present, a very succinct Vocabulary is added, but this the author promises to expand into a complete etymological one. The included "brief grammar" will be found, upon the whole, the least satisfactory part of the volume, being made up by piecing together extracts from the larger work, and so sharing in some of the undesirable features of the latter. It might have been better worth the author's while to make an independent grammatical sketch, in which he should write himself fully down to the requirements and preferences of those who will be likely most to need his help. Had he done so, no better "Introduction to Anglo-Saxon" could have been asked for; as it is, we fear that he will fail of a part of the reward, in extended use and popularity, which his labors deserve.

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- 5.—1. *Ralph the Heir*. By ANTHONY TROLLOPE. New York: Appleton & Co. 1871.
  2. *My Daughter Elinor*. New York: Harper Brothers. 1870.
  3. *Miss Van Kortlandt*. New York: Harper Brothers. 1870.

WE have not placed Mr. Trollope's last work at the head of our notice with any intention of giving a synopsis or entering into a discussion of its plot; indeed, the conclusion has not yet appeared as we are writing these words. Still less have we placed the two American books after it with any similar intention, or because they are novels worth

reading, or novels at all, except in name and form. We wish, if possible, to investigate and discover some of the reasons why the novel — the *roman de société* as distinguished from the romance — is so flourishing in England and so puny in America.

Mr. Anthony Trollope we take as the most representative, if not the best, specimen of the living English novelist. He was lately suspected of having written himself out, — a suspicion which the “Claverings” and “He Knew He was Right” did much to justify. But even should the catastrophe of “Ralph the Heir” break down, some of the central chapters have already saved the book. The troubles of Sir Thomas Underwood with his ex-ward, his ex-ward’s tailor, and his own election committee are not surpassed by anything in Dickens or Thackeray. Since his Lady Mason in “Orley Farm,” a character which raised him at once from the position of a popular novelist and marked him with the stamp of something very like genius, he has never shone so brilliantly as now.

When the question is asked in what Trollope’s excellence particularly consists, most persons answer that it is in the skill with which he delineates the peculiarities of certain classes, and the example usually given is clergymen of the Church of England. He certainly *has* made a special study of parsons, as Miss Austen did before him, and as, to take a parallel case in French literature, “Droz” has made a special study of the French priests. But to our mind his forte is not so much the peculiarities of any one profession as the general walk and conversation of the upper and upper-middle classes. Thus, he is *immense* in a quarrel, — the quarrel of two men who are sufficiently gentlemen and good citizens to abstain from bodily collision, but not sufficiently Christians or philosophers to abstain from using very strong language to each other. One of his shorter works (“The Vicar of Bullhampton”) is little more than the history of a quarrel. Now, in spite of all that has been or may be said about *ingenuas didicisse*, etc., the best of us can hardly help being interested in a jolly row. At the same time there are always, to a well-regulated mind, repulsive associations connected with a squabble, and here it is that Trollope’s art comes in; he idealizes what Mr. Pickwick called an interchange of argumentative elocution just enough to remove the repulsiveness. Compare him, in this respect, with the great French realist Flaubert. Look at one of Flaubert’s quarrels; it is about a woman *naturellement*; there is a brisk burst of epithets, one disputant pitches a plate at the other, and the inevitable duel follows. It is real, but too real and too rapid. In illustration and confirmation of what we have said, it may be remarked that when one of Trollope’s heroes actually commits a breach of the peace, it is some half-licked Johnny Eames, not yet up to the ways of good society, who

thus commits himself. This delicacy of the novelist is noteworthy, because he could not avoid inheriting just a *soupsçon* of the vulgarity which pervaded every composition of his mother's, and which in his own *Brown*, *Jones*, and *Robinson* crops up very unpleasantly.

Another excellence to be noted is, that he does not make his stupid characters too stupid. They have their transient gleams of cleverness. The hen-pecked bishop, the old Colonial governor, is sometimes ready with a pertinent answer to the much superior man with whom he is arguing; and this is exactly what occurs in real life, as the intelligent reader can perhaps testify from experience.

But these merits and others which might be mentioned do little to elucidate the problem which was on our minds at starting. Why is it that such books can be written in England and cannot be, at any rate are not, written in America? Why are performances like "My Daughter Elinor" published by great houses and puffed by newspapers of much literary pretension, as if they were real novels? Why do our novelists of both genders give us personages and scenes that are like nothing anywhere on earth? Why do the only lifelike pictures of real manners that we have almost invariably take the form of sketches? Why is it that a man like Bayard Taylor, who can write excellent single chapters, cannot put a number of chapters together into an excellent book?

Why, indeed? We are sometimes told, because the English rejoice in lords and ladies and an aristocratic society. Very well; the French have a democratic society, according to their own statement. True, it does not prevent them from counting many more dukes and marquises among them than are to be found in England; but, on the other hand, it affords an excellent material for the novelist. Does all, then, depend on the magic of a few titles? Whatever the main structure of society, must there be dukes and duchesses at the top in order to make the good novel a possibility? If so, it is a little odd that the best novels should not necessarily be those which make much use of titled personages. Miss Austen, to the best of our recollection, seldom introduces any one of higher rank than a baronet, and in this very "Ralph the Heir" there is no lord at all and only one Sir. Again, the writers of English novels (with few exceptions, and these exceptions not including the best writers) do not belong to the nobility, hardly belong in any sense to the aristocracy; therefore we have this anomaly and contradiction that in England, with its tightly drawn class distinctions, the men of one class can describe those of another as well as those of their own; while in America, where it would be flat blasphemy to speak of classes, the men and women of one set cannot describe either those of their own

or those of any other set in an accurate, natural, and amusing way, except, as we have intimated, in mere sketches and studies.

Still, there hangs over us an uneasy, indefinite impression that the respective social or socio-political states of the two countries must have something to do with the matter. Suppose we seek for internal evidence in the book before us, and try if we cannot pick up some hints which will aid us in our investigation.

We have referred to certain annoyances which befall a Sir Thomas Underwood, and the narration of which forms the most interesting portion of "*Ralph the Heir*." The first character who figures in these *petites misères* is a tailor and breeches-maker, appropriately named Neeft. Wealthy and vulgar, ignorant and obstinate, he has one great ambition in life, to marry his daughter to a "swell," and thus connect himself indirectly with that aristocracy into which he cannot directly intrude. No matter if the swell be weak and idle and a spendthrift and almost a bankrupt, no matter whether the daughter loves him or not, the marriage is Mr. Neeft's great idea. He will even force *both* parties into it against their will. And the friends and relatives of the young man thus pursued by his tailor creditor, when they learn the possibility of such an event, unanimously regard it as a terrible, an irretrievable disgrace to the family. If he had seduced the girl, *that* would be a mere peccadillo, rather a justifiable action, in comparison.

Now, here we see at once presented a state of things very un-American. An American city tailor is not apt to be an illiterate clown. He is not very distinguishable from the mass of well-to-do citizens around him. If he has a soul above buttons, and his cabbage has blossomed and fructified sufficiently to put money in his purse, he will not find it very difficult to sink the shop. Probably he would not think the marriage of his daughter to one of his customers worth any alarming sacrifice; but should he aspire to such an alliance, his son-in-law would not necessarily become a social Pariah in consequence. And though he cannot himself make one leap from his shop-board to the parlors of the upper ten, there are many by-ways of working out a position. Political life is one of these, by which not only the city artist but his humbler country brother may rise to a conspicuous place. He may even become a President of the United States; not a very successful one, perhaps, but at any rate President. Mr. Neeft's highest political ambition was to have an M. P. for son-in-law.

To be sure, Mr. Neeft is not the only possible type of a city tradesman, nor are the characters of English tailor and English swell absolutely incompatible up to a certain point. The great Henry Poole is said to go down to Leicestershire in the hunting season with

his five horses. But the great Henry Poole is rather an abnormal variety than one of a species ; nor must we judge hastily of his social position by his place in the field, where one touch of sport makes the whole English world kin.

Sir Thomas Underwood's next torments are his constituents of Percy Cross (which, as a specimen borough, throws Eatanswill into the shade, because the latter is a caricature and the former a reality) and the agents and wire-pullers of his own party, these latter especially. The poor man is worried almost out of his life by physical and mental and moral and pecuniary annoyances ; but through the whole chapter of his woes runs a strong undercurrent of comedy, arising chiefly from the fact of his social superiority to his persecutors, a superiority thoroughly felt and constantly shown by himself, grudgingly acknowledged by them, and always clear to the reader. Now we can easily imagine an American gentleman of fortune and cultivation fooled as Sir Thomas was, but when we come to the *mutatis mutandis*, the whole proceeding is so thoroughly disagreeable (to use the mildest term), that we cannot possibly take a pleasant or mirthful view of it. A severe attack of fleas might, under certain circumstances, not only destroy our comfort but impair our health for a time ; still, the cause of the mischief would always give our misadventure a tinge of the ludicrous, which might be the prominent impression finally left on our minds. But suppose we were to encounter a flea as large as an elephant. We might shoot at him, or run away from him ; we should hardly sit down beside him to draw his portrait.

We can now see our way a little. Still, we have not arrived at anything very definite or systematic. Let us, in sporting phrase, try back a little. We have casually mentioned the English fondness for the chase. Hunting — fox-hunting — is pre-eminently the aristocratic amusement of Englishmen. Not that all English noblemen hunt, any more than all American gentlemen dance ; but it is the favorite and most usual pursuit of those whose inclinations lead them and whose means allow them to make a business of pleasure. At the same time it is a truly national amusement. The school-boy on his pony, the village doctor on his cob, the farmer on his four-year-old colt, the very ploughboy on his plough-horse, will follow the hounds as far as their beasts can carry them, whenever the opportunity presents itself. Nay, all the conventional proprieties do not always prevent the parson from happening to be in the way when the hunt passes, in which case he naturally follows it, to look after his parishioners, lest they use bad language or otherwise misconduct themselves.

From this picture turn we to America. Of course we cannot use the

word *aristocratic* in speaking of a political and social democracy. Let us substitute *exclusive*, in which term, moreover, we may perhaps find a special fitness as we proceed. What is the pet amusement of the American exclusive?

Clearly dancing, the dancing of rotatory or "round" dances; at one period the polka, now the waltz as scientifically developed in the multitudinous figures of the cotillon, *Americanicè* the German. How essentially the idea of dancing was involved in American exclusive society might be seen just after the war, in some of our Southern cities which the war had most impoverished. Dancing was then and there kept up without any of those concomitants and accessories which are generally supposed to constitute no small part of the attractions of a ball. There were no brilliantly lighted rooms, no splendid dresses, no profuse and luxurious suppers, no vehicles to carry the guests to and from their destination; yet they danced on, because it was the pleasure and the function of the American exclusive to dance.

Looking further we observe that this "round" dancing is not a national or popular amusement, and that such amusements as are national and popular — horse-trotting in the first place, then base-ball, then tennis and billiards — are not (with possibly a partial exception in favor of the last mentioned) affected or patronized by the exclusives. And now the suspicion dawns upon us that possibly, despite all we hear about class distinctions in England, our people of different sets and cliques (here again the word *class* would be anti-democratic) mix less with and know less about one another than the English of different classes. The apparent paradox need not startle us, for national, like individual life, is full of contradictions. And one cause of the apparent paradox readily presents itself. The English aristocrat is sure of his position everywhere; therefore he need not hesitate to go wherever he pleases. The American exclusive is only sure of his position in his own set; therefore he sticks to that set as closely as possible. So, too, the members of the middle classes in England, fully recognizing the position of the upper class, do their best to cultivate friendly relations with it, even at much sacrifice of personal dignity; but the members of other American sets, sometimes despising, sometimes envying, generally disliking the exclusives, do not attempt to mix with them, unless when, happening to be in possession anywhere, they can overwhelm and absorb the intruders. The degree to which this separation of sets affects all the ordinary habits of life is rarely appreciated among us, simply because most of us belong to some one set. It sometimes leads foreigners into odd mistakes and very imperfect generalizations. When Newman Hall was here, he not unnaturally fell into the hands of what

we may call the ascetic set, the people who condemn all the luxuries of life and are prone to urge problematical changes in flights of incoherent oratory. Going back to England he gravely announced in public (to the great amusement of some American hearers) that wine had been completely banished from the American private dinner-table.

The strongest supporters of this exclusive and separatist social system are the women: first, because women are by nature more exclusive, both socially and morally, than men; secondly, because the home and in-door side of life, which predominates with them, gives them more opportunity to put their principles into practice. Thus, a young lady of the upper ten marries a professor whose college is situated in a Western town; she does not care to sororize at once with her laundress or even with her grocer's wife, and the husband soon finds it expedient to seek a professorship somewhere nearer civilization. Or a damsel who has been brought up on ascetic principles weds a man rather more liberally inclined; her first idea is to remove him from the corrupting influence of early friends who drink beer or walk out on Sunday afternoons. What effect the Woman's Rights movement may have in breaking up this state of things, or in breaking up society altogether, is a question the discussion of which would require too long a digression. At present, political life is the great antagonist of exclusiveness, and accordingly we find a growing tendency among our best men to avoid taking an active, practical part in politics.

We now see our great obstacle to the successful production of an American novel. First of all, one set has not sufficient knowledge of the inner life of another set to describe it with anything like accuracy; hence the man or woman who tries to write outside his or her particular set becomes at once unreal. Secondly, one set does not take sufficient interest in the daily life of another set to appreciate descriptions of it.

Notwithstanding the partially successful attempt to revive the running turf, our exclusives care little for such apology for sporting literature as the country produces; the ridiculously large sums paid by some wealthy men of a different set for trotting horses, whatever they may do for the breed, have done nothing for letters beyond some newspaper puffs; and to the ascetics, the racer, in all his varieties, is of course an unclean animal. To a man brought up under the influence of the æsthetics and humanities, be he sybarite, scholar, or Bohemian, the so-called novels written in the ascetic interest are the acme of dreary platitude; and most heartily does he "say ditto" to Charles Kingsley when that erratic but always interesting parson militant consigns *the Pumphighter*, *Squeechy*, and *the Narrow World* to the purgatory of bad books. Finally, if a member of the upper ten had the inventive



faculty and artistic ability requisite to write a good novel, which, in reference to his own world should naught extenuate nor set down aught in malice, and at the same time render strict justice to the other cliques and their representatives whom he might introduce, the book would be received with virulent outcry, unless it fell flat. Mr. Curtis was obliged to season his "Potiphar Papers" with a liberal allowance of sheer buncombe, in order to make them pleasant to the masses; and the only other chance for a real novel on the plan of his papers would be a strong dose of personality.

This term we do not use in its worst sense, as signifying ill-natured and slanderous attacks on real persons under a thin veil of fiction. We mean personal gossip, generally innocent, always of the most inane and trivial kind, the baldest record of the baldest facts, such as that Blank Dash, "Esquire," is so many years old; or that the Honorable Julius Jigamaree is lodging at such a hotel in such a town; the extent to which rubbish of this sort is circulated, read, and *paid for*, staggers belief and defies caricature. The sovereign people have made a court circular of their own and included all of themselves in it. And it is tolerably obvious that a public which can be satisfied with such information about its members, information which any item-grubber is competent to furnish, will not be very solicitous to encourage elaborate delineations of character and manners.

We have thus found two influences, a greater and a smaller, which interfere with the successful production of the novel, as distinguished from the romance or tale of adventure. But we have not yet accounted for the fact that there are some good social studies, extending over a period of at least forty years, and that whatever real ability exists among us to depict the manners and ways of any set takes, naturally as it were, the form of short sketches. Many will say at once that it is because our rapid and desultory habits of reading refuse to accept amusement otherwise than in its most concentrated, or, at any rate, its shortest form. The novel contracts into a novelette or magazine story, as the newspaper article shrinks into the item, and for the same reason. Which is true, no doubt; yet many English novels are consumed by our people, and the psychological romances of Hawthorne are well read, as the adventurous romances of Cooper were well read in their day. It really seems as if our native writers were deficient in the particular species of invention required for elaborating the simple and quiet, but perfectly connected and consistent plot which distinguishes the *roman de société* from more sensational works of fiction. Our ability in these fields tends rather to tales of adventure and psychological romances; and it is worth noticing, as an amusing practical palinode, that the most active

posthumous critic of Cooper has lately taken the war-path himself and gone overland on Cooper's trail. But there is still a third cause, somewhat recondite and fanciful in appearance at first, but (we are convinced) very real and operative.

When an author has, or thinks he has, the ability to compose a work of fiction, there are reasons why he should throw his thoughts into the form of a novel, and reasons why he should produce them in a number of small stories. The novel is a bigger and more important affair in itself; and if successful, it will be greater success both in money and reputation. But, on the other hand, the novel is a risk; it may earn nothing in the shape of either solid pudding or empty praise; it may even entail positive loss; while the story or sketch is a ready "pot-boiler," bringing in net cash without drawback, and less exposed to deliberate criticism. Still, the preponderance of temptation may well be on the side of the novel; but if we expose it to serious and unfair competition, we at once put a premium on the sketch and impel the writer's energies that way. To such a competition the absence of an international copyright law exposes our native novels; and this defect in our legislation must therefore be set down among the causes which have encouraged short sketches at their expense.

The prospect of a supply of good American novels which our investigation has presented is by no means encouraging. Perhaps, after all, it is better thus. Perhaps we may find a moral compensation for the literary deficiency. French novels are said to do harm in France, because they are so like the lives of those who read them or who live in the same community with those who read them. The mass of our novel-readers are exposed to no such danger. Either they read in English books about a state of society which does not exist in America, or they read in American books about states of society which do not exist anywhere.

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6. — *Methodische Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*. Von RUDOLF WESTPHAL. Erster Theil. Erste Abtheilung. Jena, 1870.

RUDOLF WESTPHAL is known to the learned public chiefly by his labors in the field of Greek rhythm, metre, and music. The *Griechische Rhythmik*, which appeared in 1854, bore the name of August Roszbach, but it professed to exhibit the results arrived at in a partnership of study and research between the writer and his friend and fellow-student, Westphal. The *Griechische Metrik*, which followed in 1856, was inscribed with both names. But the later members of the series show only the name of Westphal: Roszbach, it seems, had withdrawn